

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Cabinet
Place: Online Meeting
Date: Tuesday 14 July 2020
Time: 10.00 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 6 July 2020. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718221 or email stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

- 5 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors (Pages 3 - 42)**
- 6 **COVID-19 Update and Steps to Recovery (Pages 43 - 48)**
- 7 **COVID-19 Financial Update and Period 2 Budget Monitoring (Pages 49 - 52)**
- 8 **Update on Councils response to the Climate Emergency (Pages 53 - 58)**
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DATE OF PUBLICATION: 13 July 2020

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Adrian Temple-Brown

Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation

Agenda item 6 – COVID-19 Update and Steps to Recovery

Agenda item 7 – COVID-19 Financial Update

Agenda Item 8 – Update on Councils Response to the Climate Emergency

Agenda Item 10 – Statement of Community Involvement

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans; and

Agenda Item 16 – Urgent Items

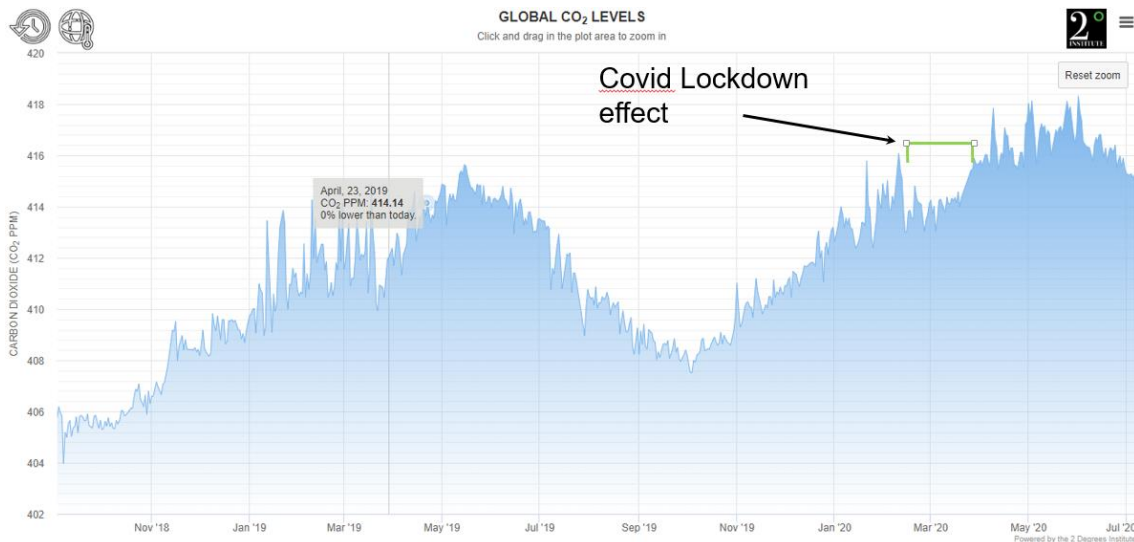
To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts and Tourism, Housing and Communities;
Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment;
Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property; and
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Statement

For Cabinet members who do not believe that Humans are the cause of Climate Change, this [uTube Video](#) details why the dip shown in the Global CO₂ Emissions Measurements graph below occurred.

My question is to Cllr Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property, for the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 14-Jul-2020 10:00am and is written out below the graph.

It is relevant to Agenda Items 5,6,7,8,10,15 and 16 – please allocate this question so as not to displace anyone else.



On 24-Mar, this cabinet stated that it would *not* add a line item to the Chippenham Eastern Expansion Project Plan (aka HIF Bid) to estimate the carbon emissions from the site clearance and soil excavation associated with building the proposed housing estates, industrial units and roads over what is currently Wiltshire countryside.

Having an estimate of the emissions now (before we get started) really matters. All farmers should already know that the soil beneath ancient woodland, wetland and grassland can contain over 30% sequestered carbon by volume. When excavated and exposed to the atmosphere the carbon locked in soil over millennia can naturally convert to Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). A cubic meter of excavated soil may release more than a tonne of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂).

In response to my question on 24-Feb-2020 (attached), this Cabinet did *not* confirm that it accepts the science behind climate change. It has not and does not intend to call for a Carbon Budget estimate to be made based on the existing, detailed, Chippenham Eastern Expansion (aka HIF Bid) planning model. This detailed model will obviously change over time, but the public in Wiltshire who *do* accept the science behind climate change have a right to know roughly how many millions of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide this huge construction project will release into the atmosphere. Without a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate, this cabinet has no idea at all about the Carbon Cost of building out the 45,000 homes and £200m of roads that UK Government policy is wanting developers to construct across Wiltshire. In this time of Climate Crisis, it is irresponsible for this Cabinet to support any major development without this key emissions information.

By planning for and publishing an independent ROM estimate of the Carbon Cost of site preparation for the Chippenham Eastern Expansion project (aka HIF Bid), based

on the existing detailed model, this Cabinet could demonstrate that it's Actions are as meaningful as it's words when it comes to fighting Climate Change.

An Action such as this in this in our time of Climate Crisis would be termed 'Leadership'.

One small step for This Cabinet could make a giant difference for Mankind.

Setting aside UK Government planning policy and associated planning law (as we all know Carbon budgeting it is not a legal planning requirement),

Question 1

Can this cabinet recall it's declaration of a Climate Emergency, accept that building over ancient countryside will generate immense carbon emissions and show 'Leadership' by executing a full carbon budget for its flagship development project ?

Response

We refer back to the answer provided at cabinet on 23/3/2020.

The Council has declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030. To achieve carbon neutrality the council will, among other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council will also look at ways of delivering new development with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual carbon emissions, so that the net input into the atmosphere is as close to zero carbon emissions as possible.

A programme such as Future Chippenham is the ideal long term enterprise in which we can develop initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to these aspects of development. We will publish as much as we can as soon as we can and will progress our plans with the environmental aspects very much to the forefront.

The Council's ambition is to address such matters comprehensively as the programme proceeds, and is making good progress with its plans for actively managing the environmental impact of the Future Chippenham scheme. Taken together with the answer above, such matters already feature as core elements of the Programme. A specific example might be a biodiversity study to understand how the scheme can achieve a 10% net gain. This would be followed by a Strategy and Investment Plan for natural capital attributed to the scheme. In turn this would allow us to plan the optimisation of different natural and societal assets and maximise the contribution of those assets in to the ecosystems they support

Question 2

The Cabinet had had over a year to consider it's emissions position. In respect of CO₂ emissions from construction, the question arises as to how many tonnes of CO₂ emission per square meter is too many tonnes per square meter to allow a development to proceed. What figures are given in your draft Emissions Policy for different types of completed build ?

I look forward to your considered response.

Response

The Council does not have a policy on the amount of tonnes psm of Carbon in new development or a draft emissions policy for different types of completed build. Nevertheless, the Council has declared a climate emergency and seeks to encourage low carbon approaches on all new build development within the county.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement from Ben Gordon about the Westbury Gasification Plant

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property; and
Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

Statement

It has recently come to my attention that there is a Wiltshire Cabinet meeting on the 14th with very senior councillors present. I'm keen to know their thoughts on new proposals from the Bio Energy and Infrastructure Group, that are co-owners of the Westbury gasification plant and Hills Waste are now resubmitting a new planning application based on a larger plant? I fully understand that Hills waste and Wiltshire council are in partnership, but at what point will Wiltshire council live up to their motto "where everybody matters"?

This renewed application is completely unacceptable. It is going to bring increased traffic through an already congested Westbury along with now a fully fledged conventional incinerator on our doorstep.

I am becoming increasingly concerned as the increase in capacity proposal if approved will bring along with it more emissions, more heavy traffic through Westbury and the burning of waste rather than reducing and recycling it which surely should be the main aim in a 2020 society "greener and cleaner" this proposal is completely not in line with the current health situation or the government's future green policies, can you please listen to the people of Westbury and surrounding areas and not just shrug them off as last time.

Response:

The Council has at this point in time received no planning application for a revised 'energy from waste' development at Westbury. Assuming a planning application is submitted, the Council will then take into account all representations received in relation to it before making a decision. This process cannot be pre-judged.

The Council exercises its planning functions by delegation of powers to planning committees and/or the Director of Economic Development & Planning. Accordingly, the Council's Cabinet is not involved in the process of determining planning applications.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement and Questions from Brig Oubridge about Salisbury Library

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Councillor Ian Blair-Pilling Cabinet Member for ICT, Digitalisation,
Operational Assets, Leisure and Libraries**

Statement

Given that construction has been paused on the proposed new temporary library building and hotel in Fisherton Street, Salisbury, and that the library part of this scheme is now in doubt due to a lack of funds on the part of Wiltshire Council, the hotel part similarly in doubt due to the present difficulties of the hospitality sector overall, and the developers now advertising for new prospective tenants;

and given that this scheme is extremely unpopular in Salisbury, and led to a petition to the council last year of over 5000 signatures by local residents opposing this scheme, collected in an unprecedented coordinated fashion by the local Labour, Green and Lib. Dem. parties;

and given that the unpopular relocation of the library was envisaged as a temporary measure, pending the subsequent building of a new library in Salisbury for which neither plans nor funding currently exist;

Question

will Wiltshire Council now take advantage of the opportunity created by this hiatus to reconsider this entire scheme?

Response

With regard to the site of the former BHF building on Fisherton Street, the council had been negotiating with the developer of this site on a deal that would have delivered a new library in the ground floor of the developer's scheme. However, as a result of the economic situation and the significant uncertainties that this creates, the transaction on the terms agreed cannot proceed at this moment and the developer has made the decision to pause its work on its site. This is a decision for the developer on its land and not one within the council's control.

The funding to deliver the new library was due to come in part from a Local Growth Fund grant the council had secured from government with the support of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Officers are now working closely with the LEP to reassign the funding it has secured to support essential infrastructure provision within the Maltings, including flood attenuation works, that will enable the delivery of the council's wider regeneration goals for this site and protect future development in the city centre.

The delivery of the wider scheme may need to wait until market conditions stabilise and at the appropriate time we will consider options for Salisbury Library. In the meantime the Library will remain in its current location..

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Chris Caswill

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment: and
Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property**

Question 1:

Who is or will be the head of the Future Chippenham team, after the departure of Alan Richell?

Response:

The Future Chippenham programme is being led by Simon Hendeby the Council's Director of Housing and Commercial Development.

Question 2:

How will she / he report within the revised staffing structure?

Response:

The governance of the programme is being reviewed due to the recent structure changes. The programme team continue to report to the Council's Leadership Team and Cabinet.

Question 3:

How much of the £15 million allocated for the Future Chippenham project has been spent? And which Director is responsible for this budget and any remaining balance?

Response:

Cabinet is not clear where the questioner has obtained the figure of £15m from.

The Council has allocated a sum of £5.2m in 2020/21 capital during this financial year. This falls under the responsibility of Simon Hendey as the Council's Director of Housing and Commercial Development.

Question from Cllr Nick Murry
Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property; and
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

Statement

These proposals would create substantial congestion and long delays on the rest of the road network in Chippenham and parts of Calne.

- We know from TRICS data from similar developments that each new dwelling will generate approximately 0.5 trips at peak hours, which equates to some 3,750 vehicle trips at peak times.
- We also know from previous and recent housing development in Chippenham and Calne that very few, if any of the new residents will work within the development site, or even locally. Most of the 3,750 vehicle, peak hour flows generated will therefore enter the existing road network, joining existing roads (A350 to the north, A4 in the East and A350 in the south).
- We also know that the aforementioned roads already have very high traffic flows and would require large new junctions to cope with this concentration of additional traffic, two of these junction locations being in sensitive rural areas, and the third junction on the northern part of the A350 adjacent to housing areas.
- We also know the A4 at Studley is a heavily trafficked road carrying about 1,300 vehicles in the peak hour, with long delays for peak hour traffic attempting to enter the A4 from Derry Hill at Studley Crossroads, and could not cope with almost three times that volume of traffic, as a result of the HIF bid proposals.
- And we know Calne is already congested, has on-going severe air quality issues and is certain to take a significant volume of additional traffic travelling to and from the east from the proposed new development.

Question 1:

It seems hard to believe that the Council has not gathered evidence or assessed the potential impacts of this proposed scheme that would have led it to the above conclusions. Can the Cabinet therefore either make public whatever evidence it has gathered and assessment it has undertaken in this regard as part of its HIF proposal, or confirm that it has not undertaken appropriate analysis before requesting this funding?

(one or the other please)

Response:

As part of the HIF bid submission process and our current work on the Road Route options traffic modelling analysis has been undertaken in accordance with Department for Transport – Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and continues. The traffic modelling conducted thus far has indicated that the distributor road would help reduce traffic flows in central Chippenham but has also identified additional improvements to the existing road network, some mentioned above, that would need to be made during the lifetime of the programme delivery. As part of the formal consultation on the road route options the Programme team will share information to the general public and stakeholders on the road route options assessment process and this includes information on traffic modelling

Statement 2:

The proposed HIF bid scheme is underpinned by a completely unsustainable concept of development, based on in-migration of people who will need to commute out, creating even greater dependency on use of the car, whilst worsening the quality of life for local residents, damaging the natural environment and generating substantial quantities of (otherwise avoidable) greenhouse gas emissions.

- Calne has had amongst the highest levels of housing growth over many years with very little increase in employment, such that there is a very large imbalance between housing and employment that has led to a high proportion of its residents commuting by car, many over long distances to work in Swindon, Reading, Newbury, London, Bristol, Bath, Cheltenham, Gloucester and elsewhere.
- The extensive development in Cepen Park North and Cepen Park South, and expansion of Monkton Park estate in Chippenham has similarly resulted in substantially more out-commuting, localised congestion and air pollution.
- In addition to a massive increase in commuter traffic, the proposed distributor road and Junction 17 improvements would generate new trips and draw existing traffic from other routes, changing travel patterns and resulting in even more traffic through Chippenham and Calne to access the proposed new road.
-

Question 2:

Can the Cabinet please share the analysis it has undertaken in making its decision to designate this site for a road scheme and massive housing development, ahead of any evidence or analysis undertaken as part of the Local Plan Review and without consulting the public or debating at full Council, including the predicted impact on the climate and natural environment?

Response:

The Council's Cabinet has not made a decision to "designate" this site for a road scheme.

The Council as landowner is promoting the area for development including the delivery of essential road infrastructure and is developing detailed proposals that will be consulted on with the local community and other stakeholders as part of the Local Plan process. This will provide rationale and justification for housing growth in this area taking account of local housing need and other relevant material considerations.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Colin Gale – Pewsey Community Area Partnership about the Cabinet and Portfolio Holder Restructure

Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation

To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications; and Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Statement

The revised cabinet member and portfolio structure as announced at the last cabinet meeting has now come into effect. PCAP fully appreciate the need for Wiltshire Council to make financial savings where possible, however, it is noted that the previous portfolio holder for Transport has been axed and the portfolio responsibility has not been reassigned.

Transport should be a high profile role if the council are serious about reducing the volume of traffic from the county highways and encouraging people onto public transport. It is also essential that the council provides a high level of representation in ensuring that the counties future rail needs are fully recognised by the Department for Transport, GWR and Network Rail. Only this week it has been announced that Devizes has been awarded funding to generate a business case for a new station.

Pewsey Vale Rail User Group, Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group and Transwilts representatives regularly attend various rail forums to promote and highlight community rail needs. At the annual GWR and Network Rail Stakeholders Conference other counties attend in force with their counties Cabinet Members, Mayors (Mayor of Bristol & West of England) etc while Wiltshire at best is represented by its portfolio holder and single officer.

Question:

It is recognised that the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Waste already has a high level of responsibilities, will the Cabinet Member now also pick-up all of the roles and responsibilities of the portfolio holder and represent the county at all of the transport forums and ensure Wiltshire is fully represented? Please advise how Wiltshire Council will ensure the future of Transport in the county is fully addressed?

Response:

As cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste, I confirm that all matters relating to transport are under my responsibility as they were previously. Officers and I ensure that the Council is represented at the relevant forums if available and depending on its relevance to our transport plans. The future of transport in the county is addressed through developing a Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its related strategies. We are planning to refresh our LTP in parallel and in support of the emerging Local Plan 2016-2036.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

**Statement and Questions from Gaynor Cromwell about the Westbury
Gasification Plant Road Infrastructure**

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Councillor Bridget Wayman Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and
Waste; and
Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development
Management and Property**

Statement

NREL, Westbury Incinerator.

Having listened to the NREL brief on Tuesday evening I am concerned at the number of HGVs and tankers that will go through Westbury and surrounding areas to get to and from the Incinerator.

NREL stated in the briefing the capacity of the Incinerator is 243,000 tons per year.

NREL stated this will be moved in 40 ton articulated heavy goods vehicles with a payload of 25 tons.

Simple arithmetic shows 243,000 tons of rubbish, divided by 52 weeks of the year, divided by 25 tons payload, divided by 5 days per week equal 37 HGVs going to the Incinerator and 37 HGVs leaving the Incinerator every day.

NREL stated there would be tankers containing 'consumables', number unknown, also going to and from the Incinerator.

NREL stated the burnt ash and APC residual waste would also leave Westbury by HGVs and tankers.

NREL stated there would be an 'additional' 11 vehicles per day in the Westbury area but didn't state what they were in addition to. By my calculations I don't think it is unreasonable to expect roughly 100 vehicle movements to and from the Incinerator on a daily basis.

Question

What does the Council propose to do regarding the upgrading of the road infrastructure around Westbury and surrounding towns and villages to be able to cope with at least 100 daily HGV journeys in and out of the area?

Response

The Council has at this point in time received no planning application for a revised 'energy from waste' development at Westbury.

Assuming a planning application is submitted, the Council will expect it to be supported by technical reports addressing all relevant considerations, including the ability of the road system to accommodate any additional traffic that may be generated by the development. The Council's highway officers will then be able to fully assess the implications of the proposal for the local road network.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement and Question from Marie Hillcoat (Westbury Gasification Action Group) about the Westbury Gasification Plant

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

To Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property

Statement

Northacre Renewable Energy Limited have revealed to the general public that they will be putting in yet another application to build an incinerator in Westbury. Considerable opposition from many hundreds of people, town and parish councils met the company's previous applications for a gasification plant.

The company wants to increase waste tonnage coming into the town by over 50% to 243,000 tonnes a year. The waste will be mainly commercial and industrial and brought by road from up to two hours' drive away alongside a smaller amount of Wiltshire's household waste.

People in the Westbury area and all over Wiltshire do not accept the need for this incinerator and will not accept the many implications at a time when they expect leadership from Wiltshire Council for a sustainable Covid recovery. They demand full, objective scrutiny both of these proposals and alternative waste management strategies.

Question

Will Wiltshire Council in its scoping exercise commit to a verifiable transport assessment, an air quality assessment that uses data from the locality, an application of the waste hierarchy in terms of the proximity principle and an assurance that it will fully apply its commitment to carbon neutrality through its decision making processes on this matter?

Response

The Council has at this point in time received no planning application for a revised 'energy from waste' development at Westbury.

Assuming a planning application is submitted, the Council will expect it to be supported by technical reports addressing all relevant considerations, including highway safety, air quality and the Waste Hierarchy.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement from Nadia Evans about the Westbury Gasification Plant

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Cllr Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development
Management and Property**

Statement

In November 2001 Wiltshire Council declared Westbury as one of eight Air Quality Management Areas in Wiltshire.

Since then the volume of traffic through the town has increased and several large housing estates have been built, more are being built and given planning permission.

Recently the closure of a bridge in Bath is diverting traffic onto the A350 through Westbury and the Bath Clean Air Zone coming into operation this Autumn will further increase the number of mainly HGVs through our town in order to avoid the fee for travelling through Bath. All of this is worsening the quality of our environment.

And the latest hit is Hills with Bioenergy Infrastructure announcing the third plan for their Northacre site, this time a Conventional Incinerator, the biggest and dirtiest of their three, with capacity of 243 000t per annum (Westbury's residual non recyclable waste estimated at 6 000tpa) burning Commercial, Industrial and Municipal waste.

At least 200 000 tonnes of CO₂, with numerous other poisonous gasses coming out of the chimney would be in direct contradiction to Wiltshire Council's declaration, as stated on the front page of their website, of a Climate Emergency. It would also set back Westbury's situation regarding AQMA.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Steve Perry – Chair of Cause

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation – Chippenham HIF Bid
Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans**

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities;
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment; and
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

Statement

I asked a question to the then Cabinet Member for Finance, Simon Jacobs, at the last Cabinet meeting, to which I received a very half-hearted answer in which only part of my question was answered, and the rest avoided. My question then related to the fact that Mr Jacobs had not given any advice to Cabinet warning them of the overspending that was certain to happen due to Covid-19, the fact that the Council was obviously not able to meet its budget commitments legally, and that it was ok to commit over £5M of taxpayers' money to fund the group of Stone Circle companies being set up and the 'Future Chippenham' group to progress the Council's HIF funding for a new 'link' road around Chippenham. I have a number of questions relating:

Question 1 Cabinet Restructure:

Is the fact that Mr Jacobs is no longer in that Cabinet seat indicative of his performance since February in relation to financial advice to Council?

Response:

I have restructured my cabinet and executive to better align political direction with the Council's recovery structure as we emerge from the Covid-19 emergency. In no way should the moving of anyone from one role to another be seen as a comment on their effectiveness. The changes have been made to assign people with the most appropriate skills to the changing structure of council delivery. I have also removed some portfolio holder posts and one cabinet post to reduce the cost of the

administration in the financially challenging times we face. Again, this should in no way be interpreted as a comment on the effectiveness of any councillor, it is a response to changing circumstances.

I would also like to clarify that the role of providing advice to Cabinet and the Council lies with our Directors. When it comes to financial matters that is the role of the Director of Finance who is also our section 151 officer.

Question 2 – Chippenham HIF Bid:

Does the new Cabinet member for Finance feel the same way as Mr Jacobs did about funding a road being sold to the public under the false premise that its building will benefit traffic congestion in the town centre as well as bring monies into the town? The 7500 new homes projected will increase traffic in the town by upwards of 10,000 vehicles, adding to and not reducing the congestion and pollution issues already existing.

Response:

The traffic modelling conducted thus far has indicated that the distributor road would help reduce traffic flows in central Chippenham but has also identified additional improvements to the existing road network

Question 3 - Chippenham HIF Bid:

How does the proposed feeder road fit with the Council's declared Climate Emergency, and the fact that the world will hopefully be a different one after the current crisis is over in that less people will be travelling by car and road because working from home where possible should be the new normal?

Response:

The requirement for housing continues into the future and roads are needed to support this growth. Building the road first allow us to "future proof" Chippenham's ability to host further infrastructure. This will "unlock" areas for new housing and ensure that these are developed in a logical, strategic manner rather than the alternative, which will potentially see fragmented expansion from multiple developers.

Question 4 - Chippenham HIF Bid:

Can you detail exactly what mechanism is in place to ensure that the HIF monies will be recovered from the developers as is required by the terms of the HIF award?

Response:

Negotiations with Homes England are underway in respect of the Grant Determination Agreement that will form the basis of the Agreement between the

parties. These negotiations are commercially sensitive and as such it not possible to release further details in the public domain at this time.

Question 5 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans:

Does the Council really expect that the public will accept the outgoing CEO Alastair Cunningham as 'independent' on the boards of the Stone Circle companies, let alone as Chairman, and will he still be on the board of the LEP?

Response:

The Council as shareholder of the Stone Circle companies has the right to remove and appoint directors. It has already appointed independent Directors who have the expertise to make the companies a success. Directors have to act in the best interest of the Companies and its shareholder. It will be important to ensure that the Directors the Council appoints will be able to effectively fulfil that role based on their previous experience and knowledge.

As for Alistair Cunningham's role in relation to the LEP board he was not on the board he was an advisor. Due to his retirement he will not be continuing that role.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement and Questions from Tim Lewis (Wiltshire Ramblers Area Committee) about the Countryside Rights of Way Team and the Local Transport Plan 4

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

To Councillor Bridget Wayman Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Statement

According to the paper entitled Maintaining the Rights of Way Network in Wiltshire: the Need for a Post-Recovery Austerity Plan, prepared by Nigel Linge, the former Chair of Wiltshire’s Countryside Access Forum, and approved by that Forum at its meeting on 4 July 2019:

“This paper identifies that Rights of Way (RoW) in Wiltshire are woefully underfunded. [Wiltshire has] the third longest RoW network of all English counties.....In 2018 the Rights of Way and Countryside Service addressed less than 40% of problems reported. Central Wiltshire [one of three areas into which the county is divided for RoW matters] received 1146 reports, which identified 1201 tasks, or an unattainable 8 per day per inspector, if that was their only work.[There is a] 45 year backlog on Definitive Map Modification Orders”

The paper contains 32 recommendations, some of which are subdivided into several parts.

According to the reply to the question posed by Mr Jarvis at its previous meeting on 9 June 2020, the Council is currently developing its fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) (which largely shadows the Local Plan Review). LTP4 will comprise a core strategy document supported by a number of daughter documents, including a review of walking and cycling strategies.

In view of the increased health and climate change priorities of recent years, such a review will need to include the upgrading, improvement and better maintenance of our RoWs. These needs should become an integral part of implementing LTP4 since, as is evident from Mr Linge’s paper referred to above, the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) team is manifestly unable to carry out its statutory duties effectively due to inadequate levels of staffing and funds.

The Council has a responsibility to make the countryside accessible on foot by the general population with the intention of encouraging healthy exercise, reducing obesity and improving its quality of life.

Question 1

What plans does Council have to increase the budget and staffing levels of the CRoW department to enable the early, full implementation of the recommendations contained in Mr Linge's paper?

Response

Due to the severe adverse impact on the council's budget of supporting Wiltshire's businesses and vulnerable residents during the Covid-19 pandemic, we are developing recovery plans which require the levels of funding available for all our statutory and non-statutory services to be reviewed. The council's priorities will be focussed on supporting the recovery of the local economy, supporting local communities and individuals who remain vulnerable, and continuing to meet our statutory requirements. Environmental concerns including climate change and carbon reduction will form an integral part of the council's plans but we are not yet in a position to be able to say how resources might be made specifically to the rights of way and countryside services.

Question 2

Will Council incorporate into LTP4 longer-term steps to augment the CRoW team and to source funds with the aim of ensuring that all of Wiltshire's towns and villages are connected to their neighbours by good, weather-proof RoWs which are free of motorised vehicles (in the case of footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways) and accessible by less able people and, as far as is practicable by those with disabilities and families with pushchairs etc?

Response

The important role of rights of way is recognised in the current Wiltshire LTP 2011-2026 (LTP3):

6.98 Access to Wiltshire's countryside is provided through a network of more than 6,000 kilometres of public rights of way, the management of areas of access land and through permissive access agreements. In doing so, important links are provided between communities and the countryside for recreational (e.g. leisure, exercise, tourism, etc.) and utility (e.g. to get to work, school or local services) purposes.

This role is likely to be reiterated in LTP4. However, as with the LTP3, the limited available funding will need to be prioritised in the context of agreed goals / objectives across the whole of the transport-related context in Wiltshire. These matters will be considered as the LTP4 is developed and subject to stakeholder and public consultation.

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**Statement and Questions from Isabel McCord about the Chippenham HIF Bid
and the Statement of Community Involvement**

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for
Economic Development, MCI and Communications**

Question 1 (Statement)

In response to my recent question to Cabinet you stated “ it will be a requirement of the contract that the Council is now negotiating with Homes England to secure the grant that, in the years ahead, developers are subject to a separate and distinct charge that recovers the HIF grant. This is in addition to normal CIL contributions and s106 Agreements. The Council will be required in the contract with Homes England to set out the mechanism for such recovery and will be required to recycle it for use to improve other infrastructure and community facilities “.

I have 3 questions relating to this statement.

- a) Have you developed a mechanism which has been accepted by Homes England. If so will you publish it ?

Response

Negotiations with Homes England are underway in respect of the Grant Determination Agreement that will form the basis of the Agreement between the parties. These negotiations are commercially sensitive and as such it is not possible to release further details in the public domain at this time.

- b) Will the mechanism be legally binding on developers ?
See above

Response

- c) Will it include Stone Circle as well as all the other developers ?

Response

See above

Question 2

Who leads the Future Chippenham programme now that Alan Richell's contract has ended ? How many people are in the team and how many of them are Wiltshire Council employees?

Response

The Future Chippenham programme is led by Simon Hendey as Director for Housing and Commercial development. The Programme team includes officers from within his Directorate and the Council's Programme Office. This team is supported in specialist areas by external consultants, principally via the Council's term framework contracts.

Question 3

Will the planning application for the distributor roads require an Environmental Impact Statement ? If so when will it be published ? Will there be a scoping study ? Will the scoping study be published and if so when ?

Response

The Future Chippenham planning application for the road will be supported by Environmental Impact Assessment, this will be published with the planning application. Work on this has been underway for some time and will continue over the coming months.

**Question from Colin Gale – Pewsey Community Area Partnership about
Council Finance and Finance Scrutiny**

Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for
Economic Development, MCI and Communications; and
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and
Commercial Investment**

PCAP has had concerns for some time about the accuracy and detail of Wiltshire Councils finances as presented and made available to the public and the credibility of the scrutiny that is applied. Recently two specific cases have caught PCAP's eye:

Case 1: The recent announcement that a contract had been placed with Willmott Dixon for £33M for the building of a new SEND school on the Rowde site. The requirement for a new SEND school was initially presented to Cabinet in November 2018 at a cost of £20M. Approval for this proposal was granted by Cabinet but subsequently as a result of considerable outcry by the public the consultation was re-opened and further consideration was given.

In May 2019 the outcome of the further consultation was presented to Cabinet and the report identified a significant variance to the original finance cost of £20M, see below:

Description	Predicted cost		
	Best case	Worst case	Anticipated
Construction work costs			
New build works	£20,526,750	£20, 526,750	£20,526.750
Refurbishing existing school accommodation	£ 1,995,000	£ 1 995,000	£ 1.995.000
External works	£ 1,607,375	£ 1,607,375	£ 1,607,375
Demolition and Asbestos	£ 168,750	£ 168,750	£ 168,750
Construction works sub total	£24,297,875	£24,297.875	£24,297,875
	Best case	Worst case	Anticipated
Non-works			
Fees	£ 2,413,579	£ 2,413,579	£ 2,413,579

Fixtures Fittings, Equipment including ICT equipment	£ 1,250,000	£ 1,250,000	£ 1,250,000
Non works sub total	£ 2,930,863	£ 2,930,863	£ 2,930,863

Risks (contingency pot)

Statutory External Factors	£0	£ 2,985,000	£ 2,177,500
Non-Statutory External Factors	£0	£ 482,000	£ 294,500
Project Definition	£0	£ 1,625,000	£ 825,000
Design & Technology	£0	£ 1,335,938	£ 848,438
Contractual	£0	£ 3,154,688	£ 2,496,875
Site Conditions	£0	£ 767,813	£ 386,563
Financial and Commercial	£0	£ 28,125	£ 28,125
Contingency sub-total	£0	£ 10,378,563	£ 7,057,000

Risk that could be backed off to contractor £ 2,511,500

Total Forecast Project Cost £27,228,738 £ 37,607,301 £ 31,774,238

Questions 1:

The actual new build cost has risen from £20M to £20,526,750 in 6months?

Response:

The change between November 2018 and May 2019 was based on more detailed feasibility work having been carried out. As the November 2018 report notes “figures have only been estimated at this time...[and] are rough starting estimates for the sake of comparing alternatives. Once proposals are finalised, further work would be needed to identify actual working projections”.

By May 2019 an outline feasibility study had been undertaken which identified a forecast project cost of up to £32,187,972 inclusive of construction costs, fees, equipment and furniture and contingencies.

In a paper taken to Cabinet on 19th November 2019 revised final capital budget costs for this programme of work were agreed and set at £33.194 million to deliver the proposal which it was noted “is an increase on the May estimate figures in light of the more detailed costs now available and the revised needs analysis”. At this stage having incorporated more detailed costs the predicted cost of £20.527 million for the new build works was confirmed.

Question 2:

No explanation is provided for all of the additional construction costs that increases the construction works sub total to £24,297,875?

Response:

The paper taken to Cabinet on 19th November 2019 sets out detail of the additional costs as:

Item	Predicted Cost	Detail
Refurbishment of existing school accommodation	£2.095 million	<p>Refurbishing existing school accommodation to create additional places for September 2020</p> <p>Enhancing Buzzard block for use by children / young people with complex needs</p> <p>Redevelopment of existing buildings including the main house and Orchard block</p>
External works	£1.607 million	Development of outdoor spaces in the new school site which was identified during consultation as being of importance
Demolitions and asbestos	£0.169 million	There are a number of buildings on the Rowdeford site such as temporary classrooms that will require removal as part of the project. As part of the redevelopment of the existing site including the main house and Orchard Block there is also provision for removal and disposal of asbestos that may need to happen during this work.

As set out in the paper taken to Cabinet on 22nd May 2019 the additional costs reflected the revised brief to create space for up to 400 pupils rather than 350.

Question 3:

A 'Non-works' list that includes Fees and Fixtures Fittings, Equipment including ICT equipment has been added. No explanation has been given for these additional costs.

i) The building cost of £20M in November 2018 included the fees so what these additional fees are is any ones guess?

Response:

Fixtures, fittings, and equipment including ICT equipment is the budget set aside to equip a school with the items required to meet the needs of the pupils which are not included in the fabric of the building. This would include things like tables, chairs, whiteboards.

Fees reflects the costs of a construction partner in running the project and includes things like architects, quantity surveyors and construction project management. This element also includes Building Control and Planning Submissions as well as other internal and external fees associated with the project.

ii) The Fixtures Fittings, Equipment etc would have been needed in November 2018 when the £20M was announced so it is not understood why this cost has been presented 6 months later?

Response:

The change between November 2018 and May 2019 was based on more detailed feasibility work having been carried out. As the November 2018 report notes “figures have only been estimated at this time...[and] are rough starting estimates for the sake of comparing alternatives. Once proposals are finalised, further work would be needed to identify actual working projections”.

iii) The Non works sub total of £2,930,863 demonstrates an inability to perform arithmetic adding £2,413,579 + £1,250,000 = £3,663,579 unless there is some other explanation?

Response:

The updated cost table in the Cabinet paper of 19th November sets out costs of £3 million for fees and management, and £1.250 million for fixtures, fittings, and equipment. This has a total of £4.250 million.

Question 4:

A ‘Risks (contingency pot)’ which escalates the original £20M by over 50% has been introduced with unsubstantiated titles and sums of money with no justification.

Response:

Following consultation and further development of costs through more detailed feasibility work, and following DfE guidance around facilities, risks were identified and costs set against them. The risks relate to both common construction project risks, and some that are specific to this site. The key anticipated risks are set out in

the May 2019 report such as heritage risks due to the house at Rowdeford being a listed building and other buildings and structures within the parkland being listed by association. Highways is also highlighted as a risk, and ecology as there are two local wildlife sites adjacent to the boundaries. Risks such as these might require mitigating action to be taken during construction, and accordingly following the feasibility work budget has been set aside to offset these.

Question 5

The contingency sub-totals for some reason are both £1 lower than the correct total?

Response:

The contingency sub-totals are likely to be appearing to be £1 lower because the decimal points of amounts are hidden in this table and this can lead to rounding up or down of totals.

Question 6:

A figure of £2,511,500 has been introduced for 'Risk that could be backed off to contractor' but there is no explanation to show how this has been established and if it relates to any of the risks listed above?

Response:

As the project develops the Council will be working closely with Willmott Dixon to produce a detailed construction risk register and in line with the form of building contract that we will be looking to use (NEC Building Contract), we will be looking to apportion risk to the party that is best placed to manage that risk, i.e. either the Council as client or Willmott Dixon as the main contractor.

Question:

The latest announcement that a contract has been issued to Willmott Dixon for £33M does not directly relate to either the 'Best case', Worst case' or 'Anticipated' scenario's and suggests that all of the risks have been realised with some other costs on top. Please advise how this contract cost relates to the potential costs previously listed and if there are further costs still to be realised?

Response:

In a paper received and discussed by Cabinet on 19th November 2019, the proposals set out in May 2019 were amended following wide consultation. The paper of 19th November 2019 set out a revised commitment of £33.194 million to deliver the proposal which it was noted "is an increase on the May estimate figures in light of the more detailed costs now available and the revised needs analysis". Cabinet agreed that they would include this new capital budget in the Capital Programme 20/21 to go

forward for approval at Full Council in February 2020. It is this amount which is referred to in the latest announcement.

Case 2:

Full Council Meeting – 16th June 2020, Agenda Item 9, Covid-19 Update and Financial Position.

Appendix B: Provisional Earmarked reserves Table as at 31st March 2020 (Page 153) is a spreadsheet, however, the reading of the spreadsheet is a mystery?

Question 1:

Line 1, Insurance Reserve – read across the line to proposed balance and the technical adjustments year end is a positive adjustment to the balance as at 1st April 2019. Line 2, PFI Reserve – read across to the proposed balance year end is a negative technical adjustment to the balance as at 1st April 2019. No explanation is provided as to when a positive or negative technical adjustment is applied, it is pure ‘smoke and mirrors’?

Response:

Earmarked Reserves are monies set aside for specific purposes. Depending on activity during the year monies may be drawn down from these reserves or added to these reserves and hence the balance of the reserves either increase or decrease. As is shown in the table and to explain the specific examples you give, the Insurance Reserve increased by £0.072m due to an underspend on the specific insurance related activity in the revenue budget in the year and the PFI Reserve reduced by £0.301m in the year due to additional costs within the ring-fenced PFI related services during the year.

This presentation of these reserves is in line with proper accounting practice and gives more visibility at a more detailed level of the changes in the reserves during the year.

Question 2:

Column 3, In Year Movements- already approved. The ‘General Fund Earmarked Reserves Total’ of 1.161 does not match the total addition of the column of 2.573 and no explanation is provided?

Response:

The column total is correct. The items in brackets are negative values and need to be deducted as part of the calculation.

Question 3:

The balance as at 1st April 2019 for the 'Dedicated Schools Grant' has '0' but in column 3, In Year Movements already approved 11.336 suddenly appears with no explanation as to where this has been conjured up from? If the balance at 1st April 2019 was '0' how can you move nothing and obtain a positive balance at 31st March 2020.

Response:

A positive value shown in a reserve is a deficit position. This reserve is the level of the ring-fenced deficit, or spend above the level of the funding received from Government. The responsibility for decisions on the DSG lies with Schools Forum, and is therefore shown as already approved as it does not require further approval by Cabinet. This reserve is shown for completeness purposes but does not impact on the Council Tax payer or the Council's ability to provide services.

Question:

Line 4, Revenue Grant/Contribution Reserve – this line does not add up to the proposed balance at 31 March 2020 and the use of () round some of the column figures does not seem to help to arrive by the balance?

Response:

Similar to the response to question 2 the row total is correct. The items in brackets are negative values and need to be deducted as part of the calculation.

Question

In summary this spreadsheet and its interpretation is a mystery which is quite worrying?

Response:

The responses to the previous questions raised clarifies how it should be interpreted and also demonstrates that it is accurately reported.

Summary:

Both case 1 and case 2 above identify significant financial uncertainties which should have been picked up by financial scrutiny before the information is published and supporting explanations should be available so that the public has confidence in how WC operate their financial controls.

Question:

Please provide answers to the individual questions above and advise what role financial scrutiny plays overall prior to the presentation of the financial data?

Response:

All reports are subject to review by senior officers and some Members before publication to ensure they are understandable. We continue to develop the reports that contain financial elements to ensure we make all relevant improvements to allow for the best level of understanding by as many readers as we can but welcome views of further suggestions for improvement.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Chris Caswill

Agenda Item 6 – COVID-19 Update and Steps to Recovery

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment: and
Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cabinet Member for Adult Social care, Public Health and Public Protection**

Statement

At the last Cabinet meeting several questions were asked about the need to prioritise the climate emergency, and the environment, in Wiltshire's recovery plans. Now that they are published, we can see that there is only token mentions of carbon reduction in paragraphs 15 and 17 of the covering COVID Recovery paper. In the plan itself there is a brief mention of 'the new normal' but no consideration of what that will be. In the frankly bewildering set of groups, themes and partners and their responsibilities, climate and the environment are barely mentioned - for example there is no mention at all in the twenty or so bullet points of Principles of the need for a fundamental rethink of work, travel and environmental priorities. Climate and environment are missing from the key areas or themes under which the plan will operate. Another example is the complete absence of climate and environment from the responsibilities of the Chair of the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) and from the eight specific responsibilities of the Chair of the Economic Theme.

Question 1:

Will you now recognise that it is not enough to say that climate and the environment are a 'golden thread' running through the Council's recovery plans? And that they need significant revision to address both the climate emergency, and a real Post - COVID new normal' of reduced travel, more working at home, less traffic and more attention to environmental goals?

Response:

Addressing the Climate Emergency continues to be a key priority for Wiltshire Council and that is why climate and the environment are a key thread that run through all the COVID19 emergency recovery themes. Recovery from COVID19 will be a complex and enduring process, which we are committed to achieve by working

closely with and continuously listening to our communities and partners. Environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting theme which will be taken forward as part of the council's place-shaping agenda. This will include integrating carbon reduction into health and wellbeing, economic sustainability and provision of strategic infrastructure. The Council's Economy Recovery group will be ensuring this work is progressed as part of the emerging recovery plan and I can assure you climate and the environment will be embedded as a priority and key objective. The council's capacity for tackling the climate emergency has recently been bolstered by the appointment of a new Head of Carbon Reduction who joined us on 1 June and will be leading the development of a carbon reduction strategy for Wiltshire.

Item 8 of the Cabinet Agenda outlines the actions the council is taking to meet its climate commitments. For example, in relation to reduced travel and less traffic, the council will be seeking feedback on its ambitious People Friendly Streets [plan](#) for Salisbury and has applied for funding for 4 key rail projects across the county.

Question 2:

The combination of the Recovery Plan and the Local Outbreak Management Plan establish at least nine new Boards and Groups, most of which have complicated links to outside individuals and groups. And most of which seem to require the participation - and sometimes leadership of the Director of Public Health. How is this extremely demanding system going to be managed, staffed and accountable? What additional resources are to be provide to those staff who are heavily involved, alongside their previous and continuing everyday duties?

Response:

The Director of Public Health (DPH) has responsibility for the delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan, however, it is a collaborative response requiring internal and external partner commitment. In Wiltshire we have established a delivery structure, where possible, built on existing meeting structures. The DPH is responsible for the health and wellbeing recovery cell which the sub groups feed into.

The DPH has identified deputies and leads to feed into each of the recovery cells to address cross cutting health and wellbeing themes.

Question 3:

How can the Council's much reduced Scrutiny resources possibly provide effective scrutiny of this complicated system? Isn't it time to revive the Health Scrutiny Committee and give it the resources it needs to carry out that function?

Response:

Overview and Scrutiny (OS) Management Committee leads the OS function and therefore the arrangements for delivering OS during covid-19. While normally OS operates a structure comprising four select committees, in May it was agreed that temporary, streamlined OS arrangements should be put in place to provide coordinated scrutiny input on the situation and the council's response. This was to provide non-executive councillor engagement on decisions, while ensuring that officers could remain focused on responding to the major incident and protecting the welfare of Wiltshire residents.

The streamlined arrangements comprised OS Management Committee, as the lead public OS committee, supported by a dedicated Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group. Both bodies have been focused on matters relating to the pandemic, but are also able to consider decisions on other matters. The Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group has met monthly to consider reports to Cabinet and its meetings are attended by Executive members plus senior officers, who answer Task Group members questions on the reports provided. The Task Group then brings reports of its discussions to OS Management Committee.

The Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group's terms of reference allow it to consider any matter that would, in normal circumstances, fall within the Health Select Committee's remit (and those of the other select committees). Its membership also includes the Chairman of Health Select Committee (and the chairmen of the other select committees). To provide further OS engagement on Executive decisions, select committee chairmen have received pre-decision briefings on Cabinet reports that fall with their committee's remit.

On 8 July 2020, OS Management Committee reviewed the streamlined OS arrangements currently in place. Following discussion with the Executive and officers, and consideration of the ongoing response and recovery from covid-19, it resolved as follows:

1. The Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group and OS Management Committee to continue to meet and consider reports to Cabinet, with the relevant Executive member and directors attending.
2. Members of Financial Planning Task Group to be invited to attend future meetings of the Covid-19 Response Task Group, and to hold additional, separate meetings as necessary.
3. To note the intention to recommence meetings of the Children's, Environment and Health Select Committees in **September**, notwithstanding developments in the covid-19 situation, with further discussion to take place between the select committee chairmen and the Executive.

The next arranged meeting of Health Select Committee is scheduled for 15 September 2020. Discussions will be held in the coming months regarding how OS can best structure its work programme and engage with the decision-making process to support Wiltshire's recovery from covid-19. It should be noted that the governance structure set out in the Wiltshire Council Recovery Plan is for the purpose of multi-agency coordination and the council's decision making procedures as set out in its Constitution have not changed.

Question 4:

Is it correct to say that you are now oversee and have responsibility for the Council's Local Outbreak Management Plan and the actions in that area that fall to the Council?

Response:

The Health Protection Assurance Group (HPAG) will report to Wiltshire's Health and Wellbeing Board (H&WBB) and LA Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) as well as wider reporting to the LRF.

A Wiltshire Outbreak Engagement Board, chaired by the Council Leader will play a critical role in ensuring that local residents and other stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors all understand and abide by the need to comply with rules and principles designed to prevent viral transmission. The main focus of this board will be outwards to the community.

Question 5:

In the complicated mix of plans to deal with the outbreak and the recovery, it may not be clear to the public who is actually providing services on the ground, and at this moment. Could you therefore take this opportunity to clarify:

- who is carrying out testing and tracing in Wiltshire's care homes, and what is the Council's involvement in ensuring this happens quickly and effectively?

Response

The Care homes initially will contact PHE who will carry out the first round of testing and contact tracing, as there are no visitors to homes at present this will be restricted to staff and other residents. The local authority is notified by PHE when such instances occur. If staff are tested due to being part of track and trace, then PHE will notify the LA and inform them of any actions already undertaken and any that are required.

The LA adult social care commissioning team have a very good relationship with the care homes in Wiltshire and carry out regular welfare calls, where any potential issues can also be picked up and acted upon

- are the Council's Environmental Health officers monitoring the arrangements being made by restaurants and pubs to keep their customers safe? And if so, how many establishments have so far been visited? If not, what plans are there to do so in the near future?

Response:

Officers from Public Protection's Food & Safety and Licensing teams have been proactively supporting the hospitality sector, including pubs and restaurants throughout lockdown and sharing guidance on the COVID-Secure measures issued by the Government. A checklist for the hospitality sector is available on the Council's webpages [here](#).

Food and Safety officers are now engaging with businesses to resume our programmed inspection plan, although these visits will be reduced in complexity in accordance with direction from the Food Standards Agency to minimise interruption to the businesses.

Over the weekend of 4th and 5th July officers from the Public Protection Service took part in a joint operation with Wiltshire Police and Swindon Borough Council in relation to the reopening of pubs. In Wiltshire over 175 pubs were monitored for compliance for customers social distancing.

Future joint exercises are planned with the police.

Question 6:

How much of the additional funds provided by Government to Wiltshire Council has so far been allocated to Public Health? And what proportion of the additional funds now being requested will be allocated to Public Health?

Response:

The emergency COVID-19 grant funding received by Wiltshire Council amounts to £25.5m. We are expecting an allocation from the additional £500m of emergency funding announced on 2 July for Wiltshire Council any day.

These funds have so far only been allocated to off-set the additional costs and lost income that have been incurred in the 2019/20 financial year which amounted to £0.499m, as reported to Cabinet at its meeting in June; none of this funding was allocated to Public Health. However, the emergency funding will be used to address all areas of activity across the Council that have been impacted by the pandemic and further allocations from the emergency funding received will be made to Councils

services and reported later in the year. Currently Public Health are estimating no additional financial impact other than those costs incurred for test and trace, for which a specific allocation was announced amounting to £1.6m for Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Chris Caswill

Agenda Item 7 – COVID-19 Financial Update

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment: and
Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cabinet Member for Adult Social care, Public Health and Public Protection**

Statement

In paragraphs 52-53 of the COVID finance paper it states that there are 'favourable variances' of £0.360 million in the Public Health budget due to the vacancies being carried in the public health team. It also notes in passing that the Public health budget for this year had anyway been cut.

Question 1:

Presumably one of the vacancies is the unfilled post of Director of Public Health, to which a permanent appointment has not been made for several months. Why has filling this post on a permanent basis not been a top priority in the present circumstances?

Response:

This post is not unfilled. There is a current acting up arrangement which has been in place since 1 June. The process to recruit permanently to this post was delayed due to the focus on the response to COVID 19. Steps to recruit are now being taken.

Question 2:

How many vacancies were being carried in the public health directorate at the time when this report was written?

Response:

The Public Health team currently has 5 vacancies consisting of the following posts:

2 x Consultant posts (which are currently being recruited to)

1 x Specialist Public Protection Nurse (current staff member acting up in this position)
1 x Public Health Specialist
1 x Public Protection Officer

The PH Specialist and Practitioner posts will remain vacant currently to enable the DPH to reshape these posts if necessary for Covid recovery.

There are also some Health Trainer vacancies which are currently being held as they are to support a weight management service which will be being brought in house. The commencement of this service has been delayed and therefore we do not need to fill these posts currently.

Question 3:

How many Environmental Health Officers are in Wiltshire Council posts at this time, and how many were in post in July 2017, July 2018 and July 2019?

Response:

July 2017 – 21 EHOs

July 2018 – 21 EHOs

July 2019 – 22 EHOs

July 2020 – 21 EHOs

Question 4:

How can the continuing vacancies in Public Health staffing be justified? Will you now give an undertaking that all Public Health staff vacancies, including the post of Director, will now be filled as a matter of priority and urgency?

Response:

As outlined in the answer to question 2 the vacant posts are being held while the Public Health structure is reviewed to ensure it can support recovery. Once the review is complete steps to recruit to essential roles in the structure will be taken.

As outlined in the answer to question 1, steps to recruit permanently to the Director of Public Health are now being taken.

Question 5:

What were the budgets set for Public Health by the Council in each of the years 2016/ 17, 2018/19 and 2020/21?

Response:

Budgets for Public Health are net of the Public Health Grant so for completeness of scale of the Public Health activity the budget and the Public Health Grant for the years from 2016/17 are:

2016/17 – Budget £(2.146)m, Grant £18.269m

2017/18 – Budget £(0.340)m, Grant £17.819m

2018/19 – Budget £0.946m, Grant £17.361m

2019/20 – Budget £1.418m, Grant £16.903m

2020/21 – Budget £0.414m, Grant £17.342m

Question 6:

Presumably Public Health staffing resources have now been temporarily supplemented to meet the current crisis. How has that been achieved?

Response:

As answered in question 1 the Director of Public Health post is not unfilled and has been covered internally since the former Director of Public Health Tracy Daszkiewicz left on 31 May 2020. A formal acting up arrangement has been in place since 1 June.

The process to recruit permanently to this post was delayed due to the focus on the response to COVID 19. Steps to recruit are now being taken.

In the response to question 2 the 2 consultant posts were interviewed for last week and work is under way with HR to enable them to start work with the team as soon as possible.

The Specialist Public Protection Nurse post is currently being acted up into.

The remaining vacant posts are being held while the Public Health structure is reviewed to ensure it can support recovery. Once the review is complete steps to recruit to essential roles in the structure will be taken.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Bill Jarvis

Agenda Items 8 – Update on Councils Response to the Climate Emergency

To Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities; and Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment;

Statement

This item provides many examples of where you are working towards a greener future and there are many activities within the report that look extremely positive.

Of particular note are the new council housing proposals, the cycleway developments and rail infrastructure. Thank you for this.

Regarding that report, there are a number of issues that would benefit from some clarification however. I will highlight 3.

Para 4, 45 and 49

In item 4, you highlight a commitment made by the council to providing a Carbon/Renewables audit for the county and your intent to report against that baseline every 6 months.

In item 45 you state that your joint council effort will deliver a tool that measure **the council's** levels of carbon emissions

In item 49, you state that you are in discussion with Southampton University with a view to collaboration.

Question 1

Can you confirm that you will provide a baseline for the county and report against it

Response

Two initial baselines for the county were presented to [Cabinet](#) on 8 October 2019 (see paras 30-34). The first was developed using the SCATTER tool and the second was taken from the government's national statistics published by the Department for

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Both these baselines rely on data which is published annually and has a considerable time lag in its publication, therefore it is currently not feasible to report against them six monthly. We will report on them again in our next update report.

Although these initial baselines are far from perfect, they do give a good indication of the main sources of greenhouse gases in Wiltshire and can therefore help inform the key areas where action is required. It is our intention to refine these baselines, however due to the financial constraints the council is under, we need to balance this with the imperative to take meaningful action to tackle emissions.

Question 2

Can you also confirm whether the collaboration with S'ton Uni will enable the baseline to be created. If not, how do you intend to address this issue?

Response

We are exploring a number of areas for collaboration with Southampton University and will be able to update more at a future date.

Para 12 and 43 - Growing the economy: Highly skilled jobs (Employment) and working with partners

Para 12 highlights Penso Power's delivery of 100mw battery storage facility in the County and your working proactively with them.

Penso Power obtained land, applied for planning permission, financed (with partners), engaged contractors and suppliers for delivery, construction and operation and is carrying the usual commercial risks for such a project.

Question 3

Please can you advise how you worked proactively with them to deliver all of this and what direct benefit to Wiltshire County there will be?

Response:

Wiltshire Council's Inward Investment lead has an ongoing dialogue with Penso Power and the Department of International Trade who are very interested in this project. Prior to the pandemic there was talk of a ministerial visit to the site.

Wiltshire Council planners provided advice when needed and Penso fed back that the process of obtaining planning permission was well within their expectations.

The benefit to the local economy is mainly through the construction phase. At its peak, up to 100 contractors will be working on the site, many staying locally and contributing to the local economy. It is anticipated work will continue for a further 6-9 months which will include the installation of the extra 50MW of capacity. The principle benefit of sites such as this one is to ensure there is enough capacity in the National Grid during periods of peak demand as we move further from our reliance on fossil fuel electricity generation towards more sustainable forms of electricity generation.

Question 4

Using this and the recent South Somerset battery storage (where returns are forecast at between 7 and 12%) as examples, does your new company Stone Circle Energy group have any plans to provide similar facilities on land, such as council owned farms?

If innovative finance such as the new Community Municipal investment bond (being launched at present by West Berkshire Council) were used, it would give local people the opportunity to benefit from such green provision.

Additionally, making this site an energy park would enable solar, wind and hydrogen generation to be co-located and attract private companies, wider grant funding and probable institutional investors.

Response:

The Council will be pursuing a number of initiatives to support its aspiration to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Where projects will involve trading the Council will seek to support Stone Circle Energy company to undertake such activity as it does not have the statutory powers to trade itself.

Para 52 and 53 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Climate Emergency Task Group)

Reports and recommendation from the Task Group are still awaited.

Question 5:

When can we expect to see them and how is Cabinet going to address these recommendations in the light of the updating of the Business Plan?

Response:

The Global Warming & Climate Emergency Task Group has been looking at a wide range of issues and themes in relation to Wiltshire becoming carbon neutral by 2030. It has developed a long list of recommendations by pro-actively working with Council officers and external experts; helping to shape policy. Initial draft recommendations will be presented to a public meeting of the Environment Select Committee in the autumn; endorsed recommendations being referred to the Executive for response. Further recommendations will be available at a later date.

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Question from Cllr Nick Murry

Agenda Items 8 – Update on Councils Response to the Climate Emergency

To Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property;

Statement

There is no need to rehearse the reasons for the Council needing and committing to action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the light of climate change, which is predicted to have far greater human and economic cost than the current covid crisis.

However, the Council needs to be consistent in its approach and to fully consider the impact of all its significant activities, investments and influences (e.g. via policies) upon climate and the environment. The value of asking residents to make 'green pledges' is greatly undermined if at the same time, the Council promotes unsustainable settlements (e.g. further embedding out-commuting) in its Local Plan, road schemes that will generate more car dependency and plans to sell irreplaceable agricultural assets (e.g. county farms) that sequester carbon and are needed for future local food production.

There therefore needs to be a mechanism to ensure that high level plans, policies and investments are as low carbon as possible, and do not result in more (lifetime) greenhouse gas emissions than the Council is avoiding through its investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

This would need to be up-front and at the earliest stages at which proposals are put forward, so as to avoid unnecessary expenditure of time and resources and prevent the council locking itself into potentially climate damaging schemes. It would include all significant plans, programmes, policies, investments and grant applications.

As a result, members and officers will be able to make better decisions, potentially climate damaging decisions will be avoided and the public will have a clearer picture of the full (net) impact the council is having on mitigating climate change, providing transparency, accountability and additional confidence in what the council is doing.

Question:

As a starting point, will the Cabinet commit in principle to introducing such a mechanism in order to provide transparency about the impact of all significant proposals on the climate (i.e. in terms of their predicted greenhouse gas emissions) at the earliest possible stage?

(please include 'Yes' or 'No' at the start of the answer)

(Should the answer be 'No' please explain why it thinks this is not a sensible and right thing to do)

Response:

Cabinet already considers the environment and climate change implications of all its decisions through the checklist process. The council will also be developing a carbon reduction strategy which will consider areas such as procurement and the council's influence on land use as a landowner.

The council in preparing its Local Plan, will do so in line with Government policy and legislation that has sustainable development at its core and must demonstrate that its policies ensure that the development and use of land contributes to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Against this backdrop we fully intend to develop a plan that is as low carbon as possible. There are mechanisms within the plan making process that enable us to do this, for example the use of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment to test our policies and proposals; the consultation processes to engage with the public and interested stakeholders to gather their views and challenge our thinking; and the preparation of evidence to demonstrate that our policies and proposals are deliverable and sound.

In the light of the council's declaration and legislative framework that guides plan making, the challenge for the emerging Local Plan will be to go further than the current plan and take more steps towards reducing both 'operational' and 'embodied' carbon in all new developments. This can and will be achieved through policy interventions including: a fabric first approach in the construction of new developments; incorporating renewable energy facilities into new developments to break the reliance on gas systems; creating opportunities for retrofitting existing building stock and so on. But the council cannot act alone in delivering this; the development industry and wider stakeholders will also be key in the carbon reduction journey.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

**Statement and Questions from Isabel McCord about the Chippenham HIF Bid
and the Statement of Community Involvement**

Agenda Item 10 – Statement of Community Involvement

**Cllr Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development
Management and Property**

Question

Statement of Community Involvement. I understand why you need to put in place alternative public consultation arrangements during COVID-19. As you note not all residents affected by the Future Chippenham programme will be able to access information of line and may have no knowledge of your proposals so will not be in a position to request details from you. Therefore, will you commit to sending direct notifications to all residents affected without them having to request them.

Response

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council as local planning authority will engage with local communities and other stakeholders in plan making and decision taking on planning applications.

The Council in progressing the Future Chippenham programme in its role as landowner therefore is not bound by the SCI but can have regard to the principles and methods of engagement within it in developing its communication strategy for the programme. There are different ways to raise awareness amongst the local community and a communication strategy would need to consider how best to bring proposals to the attention of local people, including those that do not have access to the internet.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Questions from Anne Henshaw - CPRE

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Question 1

Agenda item 15 includes seeking agreement by members that Alistair Cunningham should be appointed an Independent Director of the three Stone Circle Companies.

In the light of the well publicised fact that the two CEO positions were to be reduced to one, thus saving some £225,000 tax payer money, can it be confirmed that there will be no salary paid by Wiltshire Council to the post of Independent Director.

Response

Wiltshire Council does not pay independent Directors of the Stone Circle companies. The companies remunerate the Directors where appropriate.

Question 2.

Wiltshire Council is unable to demonstrate a 5yr housing land supply. We have been informed that Wiltshire's 5 year housing land supply is currently calculated against a county figure. This became the case earlier this year when the Wiltshire Core Strategy became 5 years old.

“Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' supply of specific deliverable sites against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old.”

NPPF para 73

Given the highly negative effects this situation is having on communities in the county, when will an up to date timetable of the progression of the Review of the Plan be made public?

Your website currently shows the following timetable dates

Start of Reg 19 Pre-submission consultation Q4 2019

Submission to Secretary of State Q3 2020

Response

The dates quoted above relate to an earlier Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme was updated in March 2020 and can be viewed via this link: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-lds>.

At the time it was recognised that an early review may be necessary in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A further up date to the timetable will be published on the Council's website later this month, which will push back the start of the consultation planned for the summer this year to the end of the year.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement and Questions from Benji Goehl

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Statement

The Stone Circle business plan says in no. 15 that "proposals do not propose carbon neutral development".

Question 1

Given that the development company is controlled by the Council, and that the Council has committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, how does the Cabinet justify this proposal?

Response

Stone Circle development company is required to provide a business plan to its shareholder the Council each year setting out the business it intends to undertake. This is a high level plan and the current plan has been revised to take into account the change in the loan finance the Council will provide. Before a development proceeds the company is required to provide the Council a project plan that sets out the detail of the proposed development. Those proposals will need to be in accordance with planning policies and also be viable. It is at that stage the Council would need to decide whether to allow a development to proceed based on the recommendation of the company and whether the proposed development should be carbon neutral or the Council could look to offset the carbon from that development.

Question 2

If cost is the main justification for this proposal, what representations has the Cabinet made to Government regarding its inability to achieve carbon neutrality for Council-built homes, and the impact this will have on UK carbon emission reduction targets?

Response

As mentioned above it is too early to assume that a development proposed by the development company would not be carbon neutral. Even if the development was not capable of being carbon neutral the Council could consider offsetting the carbon from the development.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Eva McHugh

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Question

Why is the building company owned by Wiltshire Council intentionally proceeding with plans that contradict its own commitment of being Carbon Neutral by 2030?

*See point 19

Response

Stone Circle development company is required to provide a business plan to its shareholder the Council each year setting out the business it intends to undertake. This is a high level plan and the current plan has been revised to take into account the change in the loan finance the Council will provide. Before a development proceeds the company is required to provide the Council a project plan that sets out the detail of the proposed development. Those proposals will need to be in accordance with planning policies and also be viable. It is at that stage the Council would need to decide whether to allow a development to proceed based on the recommendation of the company and whether the proposed development should be carbon neutral or the Council could look to offset the carbon from that development.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from John Russell

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Question

It would seem that promises and policies made earlier are now being ignored. Why?

Response

Stone Circle development company is required to provide a business plan to its shareholder the Council each year setting out the business it intends to undertake. This is a high level plan and the current plan has been revised to take into account the change in the loan finance the Council will provide. Before a development proceeds the company is required to provide the Council a project plan that sets out the detail of the proposed development. Those proposals will need to be in accordance with planning policies and also be viable. It is at that stage the Council would need to decide whether to allow a development to proceed based on the recommendation of the company and whether the proposed development should be carbon neutral or the Council could look to offset the carbon from that development.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Statement from Margaret Willmot

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Statement

Wiltshire Council are to be commended that, as reported at item agenda 8 on the Climate Emergency, *“The council’s Housing Board is committed to building 1,000 new council homes over the next 10 years to a zero carbon standard.”*

It is very disappointing therefore that the Stone Circle Business Plan announces that they do not propose carbon neutral development as this would require additional development cost which could reduce returns to shareholders.

The ‘UK Housing: Fit for the Future?’ report produced by the Committee on Climate Change in Feb 2019ⁱ recommended that *“New homes should deliver ultra-high levels of energy efficiency as soon as possible and by 2025 at the latest”* and also commented that *“Designing in these features from the start is around one-fifth of the cost of retrofitting to the same quality and standard.”*

In February 2019 a meeting of Full Council said it believed that *“It is important for the residents of Wiltshire that its Council commits to reducing CO2 emissions and works towards carbon neutrality as quickly as possible”*. This should surely apply equally to companies which are owned and managed by the Council and I hope you will therefore be minded to insist that Stone Circle acts in accordance with the Council’s commitments and builds to a zero carbon standard.

ⁱ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/UK-housing-Fit-for-the-future-CCC-2019.pdf>

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Peter Blacklock

Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans

To Cllr Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Question

I am at a loss to understand why the next Cabinet meeting on July 14 2020 is being asked to accept the Report at item 15 on the council-owned property development company Stone Circle's Business Plan.

The Plan (Point 19) says the company proposals "do not propose carbon. neutral development". It then talks of providing "sustainable energy generation". This is clearly in violation of the full council's stated aim of February 2 2019 to make Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 and should be voted out by Cabinet on those grounds. In any case a vote should await the review we are promised on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Response

Stone Circle development company is required to provide a business plan to its shareholder the Council each year setting out the business it intends to undertake. This is a high level plan and the current plan has been revised to take into account the change in the loan finance the Council will provide. Before a development proceeds the company is required to provide the Council a project plan that sets out the detail of the proposed development. Those proposals will need to be in accordance with planning policies and also be viable. It is at that stage the Council would need to decide whether to allow a development to proceed based on the recommendation of the company and whether the proposed development should be carbon neutral or the Council could look to offset the carbon from that development.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Question from Steve Perry – Chair of Cause

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation – Chippenham HIF Bid
Agenda Item 15 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans**

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;
Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities;
Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment; and
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

Statement

I asked a question to the then Cabinet Member for Finance, Simon Jacobs, at the last Cabinet meeting, to which I received a very half-hearted answer in which only part of my question was answered, and the rest avoided. My question then related to the fact that Mr Jacobs had not given any advice to Cabinet warning them of the overspending that was certain to happen due to Covid-19, the fact that the Council was obviously not able to meet its budget commitments legally, and that it was ok to commit over £5M of taxpayers' money to fund the group of Stone Circle companies being set up and the 'Future Chippenham' group to progress the Council's HIF funding for a new 'link' road around Chippenham. I have a number of questions relating:

Question 1 Cabinet Restructure:

Is the fact that Mr Jacobs is no longer in that Cabinet seat indicative of his performance since February in relation to financial advice to Council?

Response:

I have restructured my cabinet and executive to better align political direction with the Council's recovery structure as we emerge from the Covid-19 emergency. In no way should the moving of anyone from one role to another be seen as a comment on their effectiveness. The changes have been made to assign people with the most appropriate skills to the changing structure of council delivery. I have also removed some portfolio holder posts and one cabinet post to reduce the cost of the

administration in the financially challenging times we face. Again, this should in no way be interpreted as a comment on the effectiveness of any councillor, it is a response to changing circumstances.

I would also like to clarify that the role of providing advice to Cabinet and the Council lies with our Directors. When it comes to financial matters that is the role of the Director of Finance who is also our section 151 officer.

Question 2 – Chippenham HIF Bid:

Does the new Cabinet member for Finance feel the same way as Mr Jacobs did about funding a road being sold to the public under the false premise that its building will benefit traffic congestion in the town centre as well as bring monies into the town? The 7500 new homes projected will increase traffic in the town by upwards of 10,000 vehicles, adding to and not reducing the congestion and pollution issues already existing.

Response:

The traffic modelling conducted thus far has indicated that the distributor road would help reduce traffic flows in central Chippenham but has also identified additional improvements to the existing road network

Question 3 - Chippenham HIF Bid:

How does the proposed feeder road fit with the Council's declared Climate Emergency, and the fact that the world will hopefully be a different one after the current crisis is over in that less people will be travelling by car and road because working from home where possible should be the new normal?

Response:

The requirement for housing continues into the future and roads are needed to support this growth. Building the road first allow us to "future proof" Chippenham's ability to host further infrastructure. This will "unlock" areas for new housing and ensure that these are developed in a logical, strategic manner rather than the alternative, which will potentially see fragmented expansion from multiple developers.

Question 4 - Chippenham HIF Bid:

Can you detail exactly what mechanism is in place to ensure that the HIF monies will be recovered from the developers as is required by the terms of the HIF award?

Response:

Negotiations with Homes England are underway in respect of the Grant Determination Agreement that will form the basis of the Agreement between the

parties. These negotiations are commercially sensitive and as such it not possible to release further details in the public domain at this time.

Question 5 – Stone Circle Company Business Plans:

Does the Council really expect that the public will accept the outgoing CEO Alastair Cunningham as 'independent' on the boards of the Stone Circle companies, let alone as Chairman, and will he still be on the board of the LEP?

Response:

The Council as shareholder of the Stone Circle companies has the right to remove and appoint directors. It has already appointed independent Directors who have the expertise to make the companies a success. Directors have to act in the best interest of the Companies and its shareholder. It will be important to ensure that the Directors the Council appoints will be able to effectively fulfil that role based on their previous experience and knowledge.

As for Alistair Cunningham's role in relation to the LEP board he was not on the board he was an advisor. Due to his retirement he will not be continuing that role.

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